

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A conscious sedation system comprising:

a) a controller which generates a request for a predetermined response from a patient and which analyses at least a response made by the patient to the request to determine a level of sedation of the patient; and

b) a response testing apparatus including:

(1) a request assembly which audibly communicates to the patient the request generated by the controller and which includes a non-ear-canal-contacting speaker; and

(2) a response assembly which senses the response and which communicates the response to the controller.

2. The conscious sedation system of claim 1, wherein the speaker, when disposed on the patient proximate a bone of the patient, audibly communicates the request to the patient at least in part by bone conduction of audible sound.

3. The conscious sedation system of claim 1, wherein the request assembly also includes a pillow, and wherein the speaker is disposed in the pillow.

4. The conscious sedation system of claim 1, wherein the request assembly also includes a skull cap, wherein the speaker is attached to the outside of the skull cap, and wherein, when the skull cap is worn on the head of the patient, the inside of the skull cap covers an ear of the patient and the speaker is substantially aligned with the ear canal of the patient.

5. The conscious sedation system of claim 1, wherein the request assembly also includes a skull cap and a tube connector attached to the outside of the skull cap, wherein the tube connector includes a sound-tube attachment site and

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includes a sound passageway extending from the outside of the skull cap to the sound-tube attachment site.

6. A request assembly for a response testing apparatus for a conscious sedation system, wherein the conscious sedation system includes a controller which generates a request for a predetermined response from a patient, and wherein the request assembly comprises a non-ear-canal-contacting speaker which audibly communicates to the patient the request generated by the controller.

7. The request assembly of claim 6, wherein the speaker, when disposed on the patient proximate a bone of the patient, audibly communicates the request to the patient at least in part by bone conduction of audible sound.

8. The request assembly of claim 7, also including a headband, wherein the speaker is attached to the headband, and wherein, when the headband is worn by the patient, the speaker contacts a side of the head of the patient above the ear.

9. The request assembly of claim 6, also including a pillow, and wherein the speaker is disposed in the pillow.

10. The request assembly of claim 9, also including an acoustic coupling gel disposed in the pillow.

11. The request assembly of claim 6, also including a skull cap, wherein the speaker is attached to the outside of the skull cap, and wherein, when the skull cap is worn on the head of the patient, the inside of the skull cap covers an ear of the patient and the speaker is substantially aligned with the ear canal of the patient.

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12. The request assembly of claim 11, also including a cable connector attached to the outside of the skull cap and includes a cord operatively connecting the speaker to the cable connector.

13. The request assembly of claim 12, also including a cable, wherein the cable is operatively connectable to the controller and to the cable connector.

14. The request assembly of claim 11, wherein the skull cap includes a plastic film having a periphery and an elastic band attached to the plastic film proximate the periphery.

15. The request assembly of claim 6, also including a skull cap and a tube connector attached to the outside of the skull cap, wherein the tube connector includes a sound-tube attachment site and includes a sound passageway extending from the outside of the skull cap to the sound-tube attachment site.

16. The request assembly of claim 15, wherein, when the skull cap is worn on the head of the patient, the inside of the skull cap covers an ear of the patient and the sound passageway at the outside of the skull cap is substantially aligned with the ear canal of the patient.

17. The request assembly of claim 16, also including a sound tube, wherein the sound tube is operatively connectable to the speaker and to the sound-tube attachment site.

18. The request assembly of claim 15, wherein the skull cap includes a plastic film having a periphery and an elastic band attached to the plastic film proximate the periphery.

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19. A request assembly for a response testing apparatus for a conscious sedation system, wherein the conscious sedation system includes a controller which generates a request for a predetermined response from a patient, and wherein the request assembly comprises:

a) a non-ear-canal-contacting speaker which audibly communicates to the patient the request generated by the controller; and

b) a sound tube having one end disposable proximate an ear canal or a microphone of an assistive hearing device of the patient and having another end disposable proximate the speaker.

20. The request assembly of claim 19, wherein the one end is disposable in the ear canal of the patient.